P 12/2

How to Prepare and Wrap Packages

NEWARK PUBLIC LIBRARY

NOV 5 1982

U. S. GOVT. PUBS.
DEPOSITORY 376

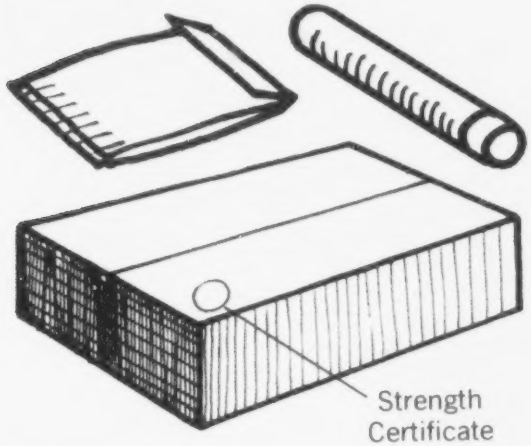
Pub. 227, Aug. 1982

P1.2:

1 Select the Proper Container

Fiberboard containers are generally strong enough to ship material of average weight and size. These are the common boxes which are readily available in the home, supermarket, hardware store, etc. An "average" parcel may be defined as one which is no more than 34" x 17" x 17" and weighs 25 pounds or less. These are the dimensions normally associated with automated parcel processing.

Fiberboard strength is indicated on the box manufacturers' strength certification printed on the bottom of the box. This certification is usually a round imprint with four numbers noted.



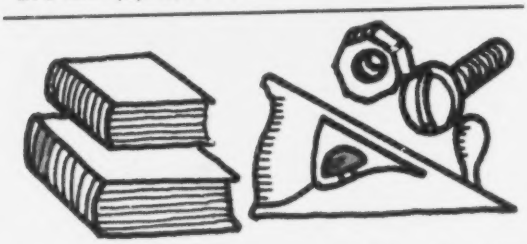
For instance:

Bursting Test:	175 lbs. per square inch
Min. Comb. Wt. Facings:	75 lbs. per square inch
Size Limit:	60 inches
Gross Weight Limit:	40 lbs.

The first and last numbers are important in selecting a container for Parcel Post. "Bursting Test" indicates, in pounds per square inch, the ability of the fiberboard to resist rupture or breaking. "Gross Weight Limit" tells you that the box can hold **properly packaged** goods weighing **no more** than the number of pounds indicated. High density items require a stronger box than do average items. We define "high density" items as those which exceed 15 pounds per cubic foot, such as hardware or auto parts.

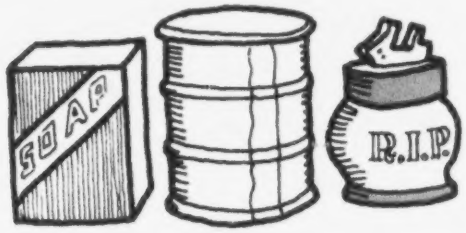
The following may be used as a guide to fiberboard container selection:

Average Items		High Density Items	
Burst Test Strength	**Weight Limit**	**Burst Test Strength**	**Weight Limit**
125 lbs.	(up to) 20 lbs.	175 lbs.	(up to) 20 lbs.
175 lbs.	(up to) 40 lbs.	200 lbs.	(up to) 45 lbs.
200 lbs.	(up to) 65 lbs.	275 lbs.	(up to) 70 lbs.
275 lbs.	(up to) 70 lbs.		



The selection of a container usually depends on the physical characteristics of the item or items to be mailed. Is the object heavy or light, large or small, durable or fragile, solid or liquid, round, square or odd shaped? Besides fiberboard boxes, other acceptable containers include reinforced bags, paperboard boxes, metal cans and tubes, wooden

boxes and fiber mailing tubes with metal ends. The container should be large enough to hold the contents plus adequate cushioning to prevent damage, but not so large as to permit shifting or



joggling of the contents. Liquids should be sent in leak proof interior and exterior containers. Powders should be packaged in siftproof containers. Items which have an odor should be placed in a container which is impermeable to the contents.

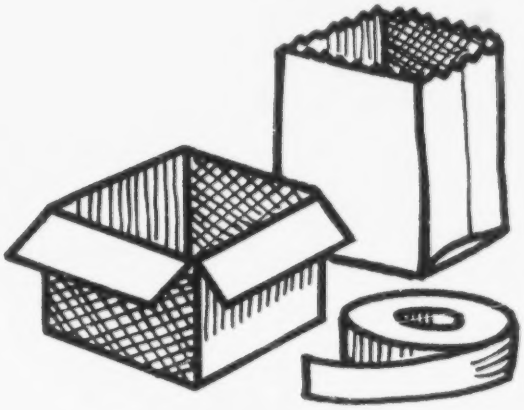
2 Cushion the Contents

Cushioning distributes and absorbs shocks and vibrations while preventing contents from shifting. When several items are packaged in a container, they should be separated from each other and protected from outside forces. Even single items packed alone should be cushioned for safety.

Heavy items should be securely braced. Many types of suitable cushioning materials are available including polystyrene, shredded or rolled newspaper, "bubble" plastic and fiberboard inserts.

3 Package Wrapping and Closure

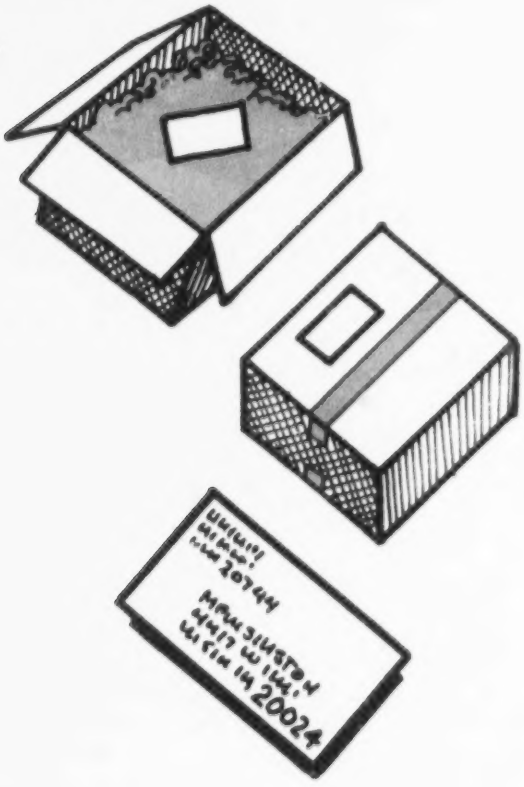
It is **preferred** that wrapping paper be omitted if the box itself is an adequate shipping container. However, wrapping paper equivalent to the strength of the average large grocery bag may be used if required. Pressure-sensitive, filament-reinforced tape should be used for the closure and reinforcement of parcels whenever possible. Although twine and cord are permitted, it is **preferred** that they not be used as they tend to catch and bind in mail processing equipment.



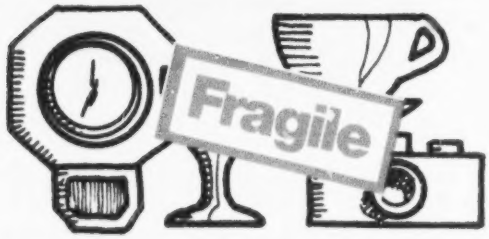
READEX FICHE best copy available

4 Correct Package Addressing and Marking

Your parcel should be clearly marked with the address, including ZIP Code, of both sender and receiver. The writing should be in indelible ink or typed on a label and be easily readable at 30 inches (arm's length). It's also a good idea to place a list of the contents plus the name and address of both the sender and the recipient inside the package. This will help in the delivery of the parcel in the event that the outside address becomes illegible.



Special markings on the outside of the parcel alert Postal Service employees to the nature of the contents. For instance, parcels containing breakable items should be marked **"Fragile"** in three places,



above the address, below the postage and on the reverse side. Those containing foods or other items which may decay should be marked **"Perishable"** in the same locations. Packages containing photographs or similar items should be marked

"Do Not Bend", but only if the mailer has protected the items with a stiffening material such as fiberboard. In this instance, it cannot be assumed that the marking in itself will ensure that no damage occurs.

Your post office window clerk has a set of rubber stamps indicating these special markings and will apply them to your parcel on request.

Hazardous and Illegal Items

It is illegal to send through the U.S. Mail any article, composition or material which may kill or injure another person, or injure the mail or other property. Harmful matter includes, but is not limited to:

- All kinds of poison or matter containing poison
- All poisonous animals, most poisonous insects, all poisonous reptiles, and all kinds of snakes
- All disease germs or scabs
- All explosives, flammable material, dangerous machines, and mechanical, chemical or other devices or compositions which may catch fire or explode

There are also strong legal restrictions on the mailing of radioactive material, firearms, knives, sharp instruments, and narcotics and other controlled substances as defined by Federal law and related Federal regulations. Certain potentially harmful or dangerous articles and substances may be mailed if special packaging and labeling requirements are met. Contact your local postmaster for information regarding the legality or safety of mailing any particular item.

☆U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1980 361-433/62